

MICHAEL A. ARCURI
24TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY
(ON LEAVE)

127 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-225-3665
202-225-1891 FAX

10 BROAD STREET, ROOM 330
UTICA, NY 13501
315-793-8146
315-798-4099 FAX

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3224

September 23, 2010

The Honorable John E. Potter
Postmaster General, Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.
Washington, DC 20260-0004

Dear Postmaster General Potter,

I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you today concerning the plight of postal customers in rural Middleville, New York in the district that I represent.

As I am sure you have been made aware by the United States Postal Service (USPS), Albany District Office staff, that heavy rain in Middleville in late July caused the West Canada Creek to swell, flooding the village. Unfortunately, many buildings were damaged, including the village hall, which is home to the village offices, courts, library and the post office. Regrettably, the building was condemned, and the post office had no choice but to close, and postal operations for the village are temporarily being covered by the Newport post office, which is several miles away.

The population of Middleville is only several hundred people, and it is a rural, fairly isolated community. For those in the village, particularly the senior population, the post office is a gathering place and connection to other parts of the county, state and country. While the distance between Middleville and the Newport post office does not seem to be great, the rural nature of that part of Herkimer County, coupled with the lack of any means of public transportation, presents true difficulties for the many seniors in Middleville who utilize and depend on post office services, especially with winter fast approaching. Many of these seniors do not own or have access to automobiles, and there are no options for public transportation. Also, those who work in Middleville now have to travel to another village for postal business can also present challenges for workers, who must complete these errands on their lunch and break schedules.

My staff and I have been in constant contact with Middleville Mayor Elizabeth Schrader, her constituents, and the Albany District Office of the USPS regarding this matter, in hopes that a new or temporary facility could be established in the village as soon as possible. Your Albany District Office has been extremely helpful and responsive to my, Mayor Schrader, and our mutual constituent's concerns and needs, especially considering the severe impact the lack of a post office has on the village. In particular, Mr. Edward Phelan, District Manager, and Mr. David Desrosiers, Consumer Affairs Manager, have been very involved in assisting the village, its residents, my staff and I in trying to resolve this matter.

Earlier this week, I was informed by the Albany District Office that a site has been selected, and that it was going through the review and approval process. At this time, it is at the Vice Presidential level, awaiting a final determination by USPS Headquarters. It is my sincere hope that you and your staff will expedite the approval process for this site in Middleville, ensuring that a new or temporary post office is established as quickly as possible.

I certainly understand that there are many criteria in determining a site – including cost, security issues, accessibility and other issues – and the enormous amount of effort and resources this takes, especially in the current business climate USPS is operating in. However, I cannot stress enough how important a post office is to the village and its residents.

If there is anything that I can do to assist you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me through my Utica District Office. Thank you again for taking the time to consider this urgent situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Arcuri". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael A. Arcuri
Member of Congress

MAA/djp